

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /066 W

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R 201512Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8474

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, PINT

SUBJECT: THE NEW SHADOW FOREIGN SECRETARY

REF: LONDON 2572

1. THE MOST DRAMATIC ASPECT OF THE NEW SHADOW CABINET
IS THE RETURN OF REGINALD MAUDLING TO THE FRONT RANKS
OF BRITISH POLITICS. BY VIRTUE OF HIS INTELLECT, HIS
PRIOR EXPERIENCE, AND THE WIDE RESPECT HE ENJOYS IN THE
CONSERVATIVE PARTY, HE IS BOUND TO BE A DOMINANT FIGURE

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IN OPPOSITION COUNCILS, WITH HIS INFLUENCE RUNNING WELL

BEYOND HIS ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. AS A FORMER CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, HE IS EXPECTED TO HAVE A MAJOR SAY IN THE FORMULATION OF TORY ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POLICY. IT MUST BE BORNE IN MIND THAT THE SHADOW CHANCELLOR, WITHOUT THE BACKING OF THE VAST TREASURY BUREAUCRACY, DOES NOT CARRY NEARLY THE WEIGHT IN SHADOW CABINET DELIBERATIONS THAT THE CHANCELLOR DOES IN CABINET. MAUDLING IS KNOWN TO OPPOSE THE STRICT MONETARIST POLICIES ESPoused BY SIR KEITH JOSEPH AND IN PART BY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, THE SHADOW CHANCELLOR, AND HIS PRESENCE IN THE SHADOW CABINET IS WARMLY WELCOMED BY PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES.

2. WE HAVE BEEN RELIABLY INFORMED THAT HEATH HAD ALREADY OFFERED MAUDLING A POSITION IN THE SHADOW CABINET, PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE LEADERSHIP ELECTION, AND THAT MAUDLING HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SERVE. WHITELAW WAS ALSO PREPARED TO HAVE HIM BACK, SO IN EFFECT MRS. THATCHER HAS GAINED THE CREDIT FOR A POPULAR MOVE THAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED ANYWAY. FURTHERMORE, MAUDLING'S RETURN GAVE HER MORE MANEUVERING ROOM TO DROP SOME OF THE MOST PROMINENT FIGURES CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH HEATH. WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF MAUDLING, THE NEW PEOPLE ADDED TO THE SHADOW CABINET DO NOT MEASURE UP COLLECTIVELY TO THOSE WHO WERE DROPPED.

3. WE REALIZE THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS COMPLETE BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON MAUDLING, BUT WE ADD THE FOLLOWING NOTES AS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST TO OTHER ADDRESSEES:
BORN MARCH 1917. GRADUATED MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD. CALLED TO THE BAR 1940. SERVED IN RAF INTELLIGENCE DURING WWII. ENTERED PARLIAMENT IN 1950. AFTER HOLDING DOWN SEVERAL JUNIOR AND SENIOR MINISTERIAL POSTS FROM 1952-57, HE ENTERED THE CABINET IN SEPTEMBER 1957 AND SUPERVISED THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR BRITAIN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AREA (WHICH BROKE DOWN) AND THEN THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFTA IN NOVEMBER 1959. AT THE TIME OF THESE

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NEGOTIATIONS, HE WAS KNOWN TO FAVOR EFTA OVER THE EC, BUT IN A RADIO INTERVIEW YESTERDAY HE MADE CLEAR THAT HE NOW BELIEVES IT "ESSENTIAL" FOR BRITAIN TO REMAIN IN THE EC.

4. HE THEN SERVED AS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (1959-62) IN WHICH POSITION HE PLAYED A MAJOR PART IN THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE FOR JAMAICA, TRINIDAD, AND UGANDA, AND AS CHANCELLOR OF THE

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EXCHEQUER FROM 1962 UNTIL THE CONSERVATIVES LEFT OFFICE IN 1964.

5. IN OPPOSITION 1964-70 MAUDLING COVERED SUCCESSIVELY THE TREASURY, COLONIAL MATTERS, OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT, AND DEFENSE AND WAS ALSO DEPUTY LEADER OF THE PARTY. WHEN THE CONSERVATIVES RETURNED TO POWER, HEATH APPOINTED HIM HOME SECRETARY, AND IT WAS DURING HIS TENURE THAT DIRECT RULE WAS IMPOSED. HE RESIGNED UNDER A CLOUD IN JULY 1972 WHEN HIS NAME WAS LINKED TO A CORRUPT BUSINESSMAN, JOHN POULSEN, THEN UNDER INVESTIGATION. NO WRONGDOING HAS EVER BEEN ASCRIBED TO MAUDLING AND HE NOW CONSIDERS THAT HIS NAME HAS BEEN CLEARED.

6. AS CAN BE SEEN FROM THE FOREGOING, HE HAS HAD WIDE AND IMPRESSIVE EXPERIENCE IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT, AND THERE ARE FEW WHO DOUBT HIS BRILLIANT INTELLECTUAL POWERS. IF ANY CRITICISM HAS BEEN LEVELED AGAINST HIM OVER THE YEARS, IT IS THAT HE HAS A TENDENCY TO BE DETACHED, SOME WOULD SAY LAZY, AND THAT HE LACKS THAT TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE POLITICAL GAME REQUIRED OF THOSE WHO WOULD LEAD. (HE WAS NARROWLY BEATEN BY HEATH IN THE LEADERSHIP ELECTION OF 1964.) IT SUITS MRS. THATCHER'S PURPOSES TO ALLOW HIM TO MAKE A COMEBACK NOW. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MUCH HE WILL MAKE OF IT.

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